1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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796 (535) (177) front of the temple, one shouting 'How-ko, How-ko,' and the other 'Is-hōli.' The dance was taught them by the Todas, and the words are Toda."

789 796 In connection with the Jadeswāmi festival the ceremony of walking through fire [burning embers] is carried out at Mēlūr, Tangālu, Mainelē, Jakkanāre, Tenād, and Nidugala. At Mēlūr and Tangālu, the temples belong to the Hāruvas, who carry out all the details of ceremony. The temple at Tenād is owned by the Udayas, by whom the ceremonial is performed. In other places, the celebrants are Badagas. The festival is observed, on an elaborate scale, at Nidugala during (785) the month of January. All those who are going to walk over the burning embers fast for eight days, and go through the rite on the ninth day. For its performance, Monday is considered an auspicious day. The omens (787) (241) are taken by boiling two pots of milk side by side on two hearths. If the milk overflows uniformly on all sides, the crops will be abundant for all the villages. But, if it flows over on one side only, there will be plentiful crops for villages on that side only. The space over which the embers are spread is said to be about five yards long, and three yards broad. But, in some places, *e.g.*, Jakkanāre and Mēlūr, it is circular as at the (824) Muhammadan fire-walking ceremony. For making the embers, the wood of *Eugenia Jambolana* and *Phyllanthus Emblica* are used. For boiling the milk, and setting fire to the wood, a light obtained by friction must be • 372 used. The process is known as niligolu, or upright stick. (789) (796) (824) The vertical stick is made of a twig of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosus*, which is rotated in a socket in a long thick piece of a bough of *Debregeasia velutina*, in which a row of sockets has been made. The rotation is produced by a cord passed several times round the vertical stick, of

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[facing p. 99]

372 which each end is pulled alternately. The horizontal block is pressed firmly on the ground by the toes of a man, who presses a half cocoanut shell down on the top of the vertical stick, so as to force it down into the socket. A Badaga, who failed in an attempt to demonstrate the making of fire by this method, gave as an excuse that he was under worldly pollution, from which he would be free at the time of the fire-walking ceremony. Though the Badagas make fire by friction, reference is made in their folk legends, not to this mode of obtaining fire, but to chakkamukki (flint and steel), which is repeatedly referred to in connection with cremation. After the milk boiling ceremonial, the pūjāri, tying bells on his legs, approaches the fire pit, carrying milk freshly drawn from a cow, which has calved for the first time, and flowers of *Rhododendron arboreum*, *Leucas aspera*, or jasmine. After doing pūja, he throws the flowers on the embers, and they should remain unscorched for a few seconds. He then pours some of the milk over the embers, and no hissing sound shoud be produced. The omens being propitious, he walks over the glowing embers, followed by an Udaya, and the crowd of celebrants, who, before going through the ordeal, count the hairs on their feet. If any are singed, it is a sign of approaching ill fortune, or even death. In an account of the fire-walking ceremony, in 1902, it is noted that "the Badagas strongly repudiate the insinuation of preparing their feet to face the fire ordeal. It is done to propitiate Jeddayswāmi, to whom vows are invoked, in token of which they grow one twist or plait of hair, which is treasured for years, and finally cut off as an offering to Jeddayswāmi. Numbers of Chettis were catering to the crowd, offering their wares, bangles, gay-coloured handkerchiefs, as well as edibles. The Kotas supplied the music, and an

789 796 787 789 796 (782) (177)

3: Hockings: E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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when the men stand beside the stream, for it is important that he stand upstream of everyone else so that the water he uses will be purer than that taken by the others (since it is untouched by their hands). While this ceremony is being performed it is also important that no one present, even a headman, wear a turban. The head of each participant must be bare in deference to the leader. When the men are ready to pour brine into the pits they must wait until the leader has done so. And when finally water is poured into their cattle pens the man from the Great House must again be the first to do so.

The prayer, led by this man, is spoken three times. When each participant returns home he is asked three times whether the cattle have drunk well; he answers three times in the affirmative; then a woman hangs up three sprigs from the ceiling. Badagas believe that performing any ritual act thrice makes it especially efficacious.

The foregoing acts, all aimed at insuring an auspicious atmosphere during the ceremony, are but a backdrop to the real business of the day: the expression of hope and gratitude to cattle, friends, and nature.

Man's indebtedness to his cattle is expressed on this occasion not only by feeding them salt (which they are thought to enjoy); often when the cattle are being brought together in the hamlet before being taken to the salt pits they are washed and decked with garlands. After they have drunk their fill of brine it is believed that they feel intoxicated, and so the owners pour water over the backs of the animals to cool them. During the afternoon the only work men are permitted to do outside is to make the cattle sheds more comfortable by cleaning or repairing them.

Man's dependence upon wild plants is also given expression during this ceremony. We have already mentioned the use of *'hubbe* as a brush. A part of it is also used for sweeping out loose dirt when the pits are dug. This used piece is thrown away, but a sprig of *'hubbe* is still kept on top of the salt and is later carried back to the house. Along with this *'hubbe*, sprigs of two thorn bushes are carried in the basket. When the man has entered his home, these three sprigs are hung from the ceiling. They indicate to the household that the ceremony has been completed without mishap, that the family has participated in the occasion, that the house has been purified, and that hopes for the future are bright. The value of wild plants is also recalled at this time; both thorn bushes (the dewberry and the hill gooseberry) are a favorite source of sweet, edible fruits. In addition, the wood of the hill gooseberry is very strong, and in earlier days served as material for walking-sticks. It still has an important religious role, as it is used for making ritual fire by friction. The axle in a Badaga's household grindstone is also made of this wood, and the buds and leaves of the hill gooseberry are used in a common medicine for constipation.

As the men walk home behind the man from the Great House they continuously chant *"hau hau," "e: hau hau," "ho: hau hau,"* or *"hau ko."* Every one of these interjections is an expression of happiness. Each participant is careful to enter his house with the right foot crossing the

234 778 (793) pasture on neighboring slopes, and processes milk into clarified butter. This, as the sacred clarified butter of the Badagas, is used in lamps within the dairy-temple and for ritual at Badaga festivals or temples. Any Badaga male may visit the Bergani dairy-temple and (237) (372) drink buttermilk given to him by the priest. Because women are polluting, no woman may enter the dairy-temple complex itself. However, (262) women of nearby Bergani hamlet come daily to an established point at (562) an uncontaminating distance from the dairy-temple and there receive (783) buttermilk for household consumption. Buttermilk from processed sacred milk is also drunk by the priest. The priest never eats meat 793 while in office and cooks his own vegetarian food. All grains, vege- (262) tables, and other foodstuffs needed by him are supplied by visitors (431) or neighboring Bergani Badagas.

796 (788) The festival honoring Masthi Hethai takes place on a Monday in mid-January. Badaga males from all over the Nilgiris come with their Hethai sticks to worship the goddess (Plate III, B). Women may also (562) attend, but must remain an uncontaminating distance away from sacred (293) places. Men and women wear new white clothing, must not bring any- (262) thing made with leather, and eat no meat during the festival. At the (784) festival's climax, two entranced priests believed to be possessed by (793) Masthi Hethai predict crop yields in the coming main crop season (241) (karbokan) and inform a few men that their wives will shortly conceive. (842) Daily and festival rituals at Bergani are thus parts of a fertility cult related to the Badaga's economy and future prosperity.

234 361 Badaga hundis. The Badagas have for a long time used seasonal

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
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539 which may be freely translated thus:—'This is the death of Śevani (a Badaga female). In memory of her, Januige the she-calf of the buffalo Bannige is given in donation to atone for her sins. She goes now in a car from this mortal world to the great world (heaven). All the one hundred sins committed by the ancestors of this person, committed by the ancestors of the ancestors of this person, all the sins committed by this person herself, *viz.*, not giving of cooked rice as food to the son in distress, the not giving of fire to the neighbour, the sin of having pointed out the wilderness, and so led into difficulty the son who wanted to know the way, the sin of having ruined brothers and sisters, the sin of having taken away others' property and houses, the pouring of water on a blazing fire—may all these one hundred sins be washed away by this person coming in contact with the gold pillar[1] and by her rubbing herself against the silver pillar.[1] May the door of the house of Karma (Fate) be shut up against this person. May the door of the house of Dharma (Meritoriousness) be open to this person. May the devils and other evil beings cease their mischief to this person. May the Milapâla thread become tight to enable the soul of this one to walk over it and reach the heavens. May the door of the world of happiness (Sagga-Svarga) be open to this person. May this person become resplendent with beauty, by taking hold of the feet of that Brahma,[2] and by taking hold of the feet of this Basava[2]. May this one reach the holy presence of Śiva.' All say 'May it be so.—Amen'.

764 Let us suppose that the burial ground is reached, and that the Badaga in the case before us belongs to a caste that is accustomed to bury its dead. The eldest of the agnatic kindred fixes a crowbar on the south side of the corpse. All the other Badagas now join him in digging a big oblong pit to contain the dead body. The body is then taken round this pit and is placed in it with its face turned towards the north. Four twigs of the Apâmârga (Tamil Nâyuruvi—*Achyranthes aspera*) are planted at the four corners of this oblong pit. A lighted lamp made of cowdung and filled with oil is placed beside the head of the corpse and threads are passed diagonally

(824) (239) (512)

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(775) [1] Gold and silver pillars are supposed to exist in the other world and the soul of the dead by coming in contact with these is believed to wash away all its sins.

(776) [2] Gods in whom the Badagas believe in this world. Basava is regularly worshipped. Śiva is the highest god in their mythology and through the worship of Brahma and Basava they reach him in the end.

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
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764 over the four twigs. The oldest relation now descends into the pit and performs his last act of worship to the dead body by lighting [237] (or rather throwing into the fire) perfumes. This ceremony is [372] called *Mîlapâla*—the passing of the thread (of the manes over the dead man.) Several petty things are then placed in the grave. First of all a *Liṅga*, which is supposed to give to the dead eternal felicity in the other world. Then come a small gold coin called *Virarâyapaṇa* of the old Maisûr mint, a milking vessel a bambu measure, rice and other condiments, a stick with a silver knob, an umbrella and a new basket are also placed in the grave. These are supposed to be of service to the departed individual in the other world. Whatever may be omitted, the *Liṅga* and the *Virarâyapaṇa*, the bambu measure and the milking vessel (*Hoṇe*) must always be placed in the grave. Even the poorest Baḍaga must not grudge these to his dead relation.

After all these arrangements are completed and the dead body is thus provided with what it needs for its journey to the other world all stand round the grave and the eldest son, or the nearest agnatic kinsman if there is not a son, takes three handfuls of earth and pronounces the following *mantra* or incantation :—

Jatige śêru janage śêru
Hetta hettappane śêru
Mutta muttappanê śêru :

'Mix on with your class, mix on with your people, mix on with your forefathers and mix on with the forefathers of your forefathers' All pronounce this and throw down three handfuls of earth each. The meaning is plain ; the soul of the departed is requested to join the souls of the forefathers of the family who have already departed from this life. Then the grave is covered up. In thus covering up the grave the earth must not be passed between the two legs of the person who throws it in. Then five small stones are placed over the closed grave, one at each of the four corners and one in the middle. The spade which was used in digging the grave is stuck to its handle in a reversed position and is dragged from south to north and cast away. All the men then proceed to the river, bathe, and return to their homes by dark. When they return home a lamp 778 is lighted and is worshipped by every one of these persons. It may 787 here be mentioned incidentally that the worship of lighted lamps is a characteristic feature of the Baḍaga religion. In every house [354] the lighted lamp is worshipped, and it is a belief among them that if a light dies out of itself in a house